SOULSHADOWS II: DEATH HUNTS THE SOUL

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@2009



INT. THE ALCOVE

As we enter, we find Tanis seated at her small table. She methodically deals cards into a specific arrangement.

She looks up as we approach -- then she motions to the chair across from her, and bids us to sit. We do.

The ancient chair CREAKS beneath our weight.

ON THE TABLE

These are Tarot cards. A Celtic Cross formation is spread on the table before us.

> TANIS (0.S.) Some be thinkin' they be magic in these cards...and others be thinkin' they lie.

WIDER

Tanis lifts the deck that holds the remaining cards -- she holds it aloft in one palm -- their backs to us, and the faces of the cards hidden.

TANIS And some...they be waitin' to see what the cards be sayin'...

A single card -- under its own power -- rises from the center of the deck that Tanis holds.

TANIS ...and only then do they decide to believe them or no.

Tanis plucks the single, raised card from the deck and sets the remaining cards aside.

She flips the card around. A skeleton on horseback.

The Death card.

TANIS The card of Death. He tell us that something be comin' to an end...somethin' unstoppable... and there be no escapin' it.

Tanis sets the card on the table, face up.

TANIS The witches readin' them cards, they will tell you Death ain't always a card to fear...but tonight...

Tanis smiles as she holds the Tarot deck aloft once more -then she lets the cards slip from her fingers.

ON THE CARDS

As Tanis releases the cards, they slowly flutter through the air...unnaturally slow, dissolving into...

ENVELOPES

They are bills -- all of them stamped with the words "PAST DUE" in a large, red, and angry font.

TANIS (V.O.) ...tonight, Death ain't nobody's friend. This card got itself a tale to tell...and this tale be called..."Death Hunts the Soul."

SUPER: DEATH HUNTS THE SOUL

The envelopes tumble down like leaves, ultimately landing atop a battered coffee table. Pulling back reveals...

INT. FLAT, DINING ROOM - DAY

ADRIAN, 29, who lives in a dingy one bedroom flat with nobody but himself for company.

He sits at a round table, more suited to a furnished patio than a living room. Bills adorn it's surface, covering every inch.

Coffee ring stains have already marked yesterday's post as Adrian continues to read another devastated blow to his bank balance.

> ADRIAN (V.O.) Where am I gonna find this kind of cash?

Adrian picks up a newspaper. His eyes glance over the appointments. He shakes his head each time he reads 'degree' and 'minimum five years experience'.

He picks up his identity badge and attaches it to his shirt. It reads-

TEXT: ADRIAN FEENEY, JANITOR, BADGE NO. #98125667

He picks up his keys and leaves.

INT. SHOP - EVENING

Adrian steps inside a small backstreet shop. A small bell above the entrance SIGNALS his arrival.

The shops appears to look like a snapshot as if stepping into the past. Wooden furnishings dominate the surroundings.

A round table draws the customers attention center of the room.

Adrian sits down to await for the owner of the shop to attend to his custom.

A low-level light hangs over the table. It's so dimly lit that he can only see across the table. The paintings that observe from the walls have faded into the background.

LADY DEMOR, 67, wears a scarf over her head and a veil. She slowly enters from the back of the shop to greet her customer.

She takes a seat and retrieves a deck of cards from under the table.

Adrian automatically brings out a few notes and sets them on Lady Demor's side of the table.

Lady Demor, with a French accent, speaks slowly and with a gravelly voice.

LADY DEMOR Thank you. What kind of reading are you looking for?

ADRIAN Can you see into the near future?

LADY DEMOR A future reading? Your future's your future. Could be of any time. Lady Demor can only present you with the information the cards have revealed. What you do with it is down to you. Nothing like that. Not interested in a live or die scenario. I have money problems and I can't afford the bills. Do the cards have a solution for me.

LADY DEMOR A wealth reading.

She places the tarot cards on the table and uses the Celtic Cross spread. Four cards place vertically with two either side and another four cards are placed next to the cross, also vertically.

LADY DEMOR Lets see if you'll leave these problems behind you.

A few moments later after the cross has been revealed. Lady Demor reveals the ninth card.

ADRIAN What's this card?

LADY DEMOR This card represents your hopes and fears. Card fifteen.

ADRIAN The Devil's picture's on it. That's not good.

LADY DEMOR It's how you interpret the meaning of the card.

ADRIAN Yeah...well...overall it ain't looking good.

LADY DEMOR It's not a complete reading.

She reaches over to reveal the last card, and slowly turns it over.

A look of horror crosses Adrian's face.

He closes his eyes and sits on his hands.

His voice shakes as his bottom lip quivers.

ADRIAN The Death card. Lady Demor. Will my money problems go away?

Lady Demor shakes her head in disappointment. She scans the cards in the order as they were revealed.

LADY DEMOR This is not good. No no. I'm afraid you have not long to live.

Adrian opens his eyes and sees the laughing grin of Death. Dead people and skulls rest at Death's feet.

The face of Death, etched into his memory as his image takes control of all thoughts.

He flips the Death card over.

ADRIAN Lets hope you're wrong for my sake.

He stands up and leaves the shop.

INT. HOSPITAL. STOREROOM - MIDNIGHT

Adrian sits opposite JEFF, the overnight security of the hospital. As they play cards.

With boxes as makeshift seats and another that doubles up as a table in between.

Adrian holds a full house, pushes all his money in and coyly smiles.

JEFF

Deal?

ADRIAN I've got you this time.

A gleeful Adrian lays his cards down.

JEFF Shame those snake eyes have gone to waste.

Jeff glances at his watch.

JEFF I could have done playing for another twenty minutes. Adrian's eyes open wide.

ADRIAN A straight flush. Bastard. That's all my money.

JEFF You're almost as unlucky as the previous janitor.

Adrian picks up a mop and puts it into the bucket on wheels.

ADRIAN What happened to him?

Jeff laughs.

JEFF Slipped on water. He's a janitor for crying out loud.

Adrian pushes the bucket out of the storeroom.

ADRIAN Three o'clock?

JEFF You'll have to rob the patients to get a game with me.

ADRIAN Suit yourself.

Adrian leaves the room.

HALL

After a few hours of cleaning the floors. A GIRL of eight in a red dress, skips into the hallway from an adjoining hall.

Her shoes CLICK off the tiles as she skips up to Adrian.

Adrian stops in his tracks.

He looks up at the clock, it's hands point to five to two in the morning.

GIRL Have you seen my daddy?

ADRIAN I've not seen anyone princess. What are you doing up?

GIRL

Never mind.

The Girl begins to whistle before she skips down the hallway.

The NIGHT NURSE pushes a door open at the end of the hallway. As the Girl skips past her.

Adrian briefly sees an image of a JANITOR pushing a mop and bucket behind the Night Nurse, which startles Adrian.

The Janitor gives Adrian a side on look with his eyelids closed. The door swings open and closed whilst the Night Nurse walks towards Adrian and obscures his view.

Adrian drops his mop and walks towards the Janitor.

He speaks to the Night Nurse and points behind her.

ADRIAN

Who's that janitor?

The Night Nurse continues to walk past Adrian and speaks over her shoulder.

NIGHT NURSE There was no one there, just me.

ADRIAN You did see the young girl in a red dress, didn't you?

NIGHT NURSE Honestly Adrian, stop playing games and get back to work.

The Night Nurse turns to walk down another hallway.

Adrian pushes a door open and looks down both ways of the adjoining hall.

He rubs his eyes and retreats back to work.

INT. FLAT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Adrian sits at his table drawing up drafts. He's bent over close to a draft as he carefully writes-

TEXT: MASSIMO DOMENICALI

Next to him sits a small pile of fake drafts alongside a similar sized pile of notes.

He picks up a bill. It's red font and bold font stretches all the way to the bottom of the page. He scans his eyes to the spaced out section at the bottom that states-

TEXT: DUE DATE 29th September

He picks up today's newspaper and reads the corner of the page.

TEXT: 27th September 2009

He shakes his head, pulls back his sleeve to reveal his watch. Picks up his keys, money and I.D. And then leaves.

INT. HOSPITAL. STOREROOM - MIDNIGHT

Adrian and Jeff again sit opposite each other with cards in hand and cash in the center.

Jeff checks his watch.

JEFF Come on Ady, I got to end this. My shift starts in three minutes.

Adrian screws his eyebrows.

ADRIAN Don't be so sure. This hand's enough to bring down Nick The Greek.

He smiles and displays his cards.

Jeff shapes his mouth as his pretends to offer sympathy.

JEFF Ohhh, so close.

Adrian's eyes awaken as if they've reacted to a loud bang.

ADRIAN What! Four of a kind. What the...

Jeff stands up, puts on his cap and picks up his clipboard.

JEFF It's just skill, is all.

ADRIAN Bull! It's certainly something!

Jeff starts to walk out of the room.

JEFF Catch you later. The vending machine is on me. You can have all M&M's you'd like.

Jeff laughs as he exits the room.

HALL

A few hours later, Adrian with a mop in hand. Slowly cleans the hall's floors as his head hangs low.

He's preoccupied as if on autopilot. Lazily sweeps the floor from left to right in a mundane repetitive action.

'AHHH'

A loud SCREAM ignites Adrian that awakens him from his zombie state. He looks around to find it's source.

Cold HANDS touch his lower neck from behind, which jolts Adrian forward. He turns around like lightning and only sees a three-quarter moon shining brightly in the clear sky.

The hairs on his neck remain standing, which prompts him to rub his neck.

A few windows swing open as the wind picks up and scoops up dead leaves and debris into the hall. TREE BRANCHES scrape locked windows as if elongated fingers try to push them open.

SHADOWS cross the hall from outside and enter the rooms whilst others exit in the distance.

The wind SCREAMS as a thousand voices yell and carry SPIRITS along into the hall.

Adrian DROPS his mop and covers his ears as they begin to bleed.

The wind and screams die down a little which allows Adrian to uncover his ears.

The young Girl from earlier screams for help.

GIRL Daddy, leave my daddy alone!

Adrian sees the Janitor from yesterday, who enters a Science Laboratory with a MAN's body slung over his shoulder.

The Janitor stops and turns to look at Adrian for a brief moment before he finally closes the door behind him.

The sound of the door closing signals the end of the screams.

Adrian runs off and leaves the mop and bucket as they were.

LATER

Adrian returns with Jeff.

As they turn the corner.

ADRIAN Look, it's just down-

Adrian stops suddenly.

The hall's cleared of all debris. The windows are closed and his mop that was once lying down, now appears upright.

> ADRIAN There were leaves...everywhere.

He looks at Jeff, who expression of doubt has taken over all speech.

ADRIAN You did hear the screams?

Jeff laughs as he trots back to his post.

JEFF Yeah, the patients and they're the wackos. Ady, you been in this job far too long.

Adrian shakes his head in disbelief.

Jeff shouts down the hall.

JEFF Take a holiday man, you need it. Trust me!

INT. SHOP - EVENING

Adrian's sits opposite Lady Demor. Who, with a cigarette in hand and a shot of whiskey next to the pile of tarot cards. Coughs, which stutters her response.

LADY DEMOR Like...like I've said.

She reveals another card, and coughs again.

LADY DEMOR You shouldn't have...have another reading so soon.

The 'Fool' card's revealed. Adrian grimaces at the picture's resemblance to the Joker card. The Joker's image flashes into his head.

ADRIAN I must. The future can change. It has to. For my sake.

Lady Demor's hand's tentatively poised to turn the last card.

LADY DEMOR

Ready?

Adrian puts both hands together and bows his head.

ADRIAN As ready as I'll ever be.

Lady Demor reveals the Death card and looks at Adrian who has gone completely white.

He closes his eyes and shakes his head.

ADRIAN Not again. I'm dead.

He opens his eyes and Death's laughing grin reverberates around his mind.

He stands up and brings out a crushed note from his pocket. Looks at it for a millisecond before he tosses it onto the table.

He turns and walks out.

Lady Demor picks up the note and unravels it. She tuts, shakes her head and then takes a long drag from her cigarette.

INT. HOSPITAL. HALL

Adrian walks down the hall with a bucket and sponge. Visibly shaken. He walks down the hall and constantly looks around him like an overactive kid on a sugar high.

He walks past Jeff and doesn't make an effort to make eye contact.

JEFF Hey Ady, it's me! Your banker and friend.

Jeff laughs.

JEFF Want a game later?

Adrian's agitated. Speaks over his shoulder.

ADRIAN Maybe, maybe later.

Adrian turns to walk down another-

HALL

He freezes. Soapy water spills from his bucket.

A pair of bare legs lie into the hall from an unlit room.

ADRIAN

What the...

LAUGHTER fills the air followed by the young Girl's voice.

GIRL He's coming for you!

The Girl's comment triggers a flashback of the Death's image which troubles Adrian.

More LAUGHTER echoes off the walls as he looks around him to search from where this voice haunts him.

The legs suddenly get pulled into the darkened room, followed by the loud click as the door's lock closes.

Dirty water starts to slowly seep from under the door which once again grabs Adrian's full attention. A white palm trails down the door's window.

A SCREAM distracts Adrian who turns around and sees a room light on through the frosted glass. The Girl's voice eerily calls out.

GIRL

Help me!

The light flicks OFF.

He walks over to the room, pushes the door open, and doesn't cross the threshold.

A pair of CAT'S EYES reflect from the other side of the room.

ADRIAN

(Whispers) Come here princess, it's okay.

The cat's eyes flicker and refuse to budge.

Apprehensive, Adrian leans in to look for the light switch.

He hears heavy breathing close by and instantly freezes.

A mop's handle falls to the ground, enlightened by the hall's weak light.

Adrian backtracks, with soapy water that continues to jump out from the bucket as Adrian's nerves have gotten the better of him.

The Girl screams when the door SLAMS shut. It's window cracks and resembles a broken mosaic.

SILENCE

Dirty water suddenly creeps from under the door. The water slowly spreads out towards Adrian. He steps backwards when out of the blue footsteps breaks the dirty water's smooth surface.

With nobody to be seen, Adrian drops his bucket and sponge and runs off.

INT. HOSPITAL. STOREROOM - MIDNIGHT

It's the next day.

Adrian sits on a box and uses another as a makeshift table. He starts his lunch hour a few minutes after midnight. With a sandwich in hand, he perches a folded newspaper over his crossed legs.

Jeff walks in and sits down opposite Adrian and lets out a groan as he takes the weight off his feet. He sets down his clipboard and cap too, and then brings out a beaten up pack of cards from his chest pocket.

The name 'GILES' adorns the packet.

JEFF

Wanna play?

Adrian shuffles down a mouthful assisted by a huge gulp of water.

ADRIAN I've no bones to gamble with. I'm also not in the mood.

Jeff deals the cards.

JEFF Okay. Let's play to relax.

Adrian picks up his cards.

ADRIAN Alright, but leave the jokers aside.

JEFF You know these cards belonged to Giles?

Jeff discards one card from his hand. Then he takes a brief moment to scan through the pack to remove the last two.

ADRIAN No. Who's Giles?

JEFF The previous janitor.

He leaves the three jokers to the side with one that faces upwards.

Adrian catches the joker's smile with the corner of his eye. He drops his hand as the joker draws his attention.

It's smile eerily reminds him of the Fool card's image.

Death's image haunts him, accompanied by Lady Demor's chilling voice.

LADY DEMOR (B.G.) This is not good...not long to live.

Adrian drops his cards, stands up and leaves his unfinished sandwich behind.

JEFF Where are you going?

Adrian grabs the mop and bucket, and puts a box of toiletries under his arm.

ADRIAN

Not now.

He leaves the room.

Jeff points to the makeshift card table as he raises his voice.

JEFF What 'bout the game?

He throws a pair of Knights and a Joe Louis down, and then picks up Adrian's newspaper.

HALL

Adrian pushes the bucket along the hall with his mop. He walks into the hall from the previous night. This time he turns the other direction to avoid the rooms with all the disturbances.

He gently pushes the bucket ahead of him, and then starts to wipe the floor.

Ghostly figures fill the windows from outside. An unaware Adrian continues to keep his head down, as he tries to catch up on lost time.

He hears an unclear whisper from just behind his ear. He quickly turns around and grabs hold of his ear, to rub away the cold dead of night. Cries and laughter fill the stale air. Adrian has that 'oh no, not again' look across his face.

GIRL

Help me!

The hall's lights flicker before they switch off like a domino effect. One by one away from Adrian.

DARKNESS

For a brief moment...

A room's light takes an age to flicker on at the end of the corridor.

A VOICE over the intercom makes an announcement.

VOICE Giles, can Giles go to Room 113. Spillage in Room 113.

Adrian slowly walks down the corridor. Inaudible whispers fill the air.

The moon gradually reveals itself behind the black clouds and lights up the corridor.

He looks up at the moon and freezes. Each window pane's filled with a ghostly aspirations. He looks down and away from the windows.

A WHISPER echoes around the hall.

WHISPER Not long to live.

Lots of LAUGHTER replace the whispers.

Adrian continues to walk down the corridor and ignores the laughter.

He stops outside ROOM 113. The room has the word 'LABORATORY' scrolled across it in an arc.

The moon's light exposes blood smears next to the handle across the wall.

He looks down, DIRTY WATER surrounds him. His white rimmed shoes engulfed from the mess that seeps from the room.

He takes a deep breath as he opens the door.

LAB ROOM

Adrian steps into the Lab Room and leaves behind his equipment.

The whole floor's covered in dirty water. The sound of water from a tap at the other side of the room dominates the silence.

Lab tools and equipment lie broken along the floor.

A JOKER card rests next to the light switch. Which raises an eyebrow.

He looks down and sees a trail of playing cards along the floor. Some rest on broken equipment, others float on the water.

He follows the trail down the aisle and turns around the corner.

He jumps back in shock. Jeff lies face down with a broken mop handle in his back.

ADRIAN Aw shit, Jeff. What happened?

Playing cards lead to Jeff's body. Blood trickles out into the dirty water.

A sink next to Jeff, with one tap on, continues to run. The water overflows over the edge and onto Jeff below.

Adrian makes his way over to the sink to turn the tap off. He can't quite fully close the tap off, as it continues to drip.

A different CARD floats in the sink face down. He picks it up and slowly turns it over.

A single LAUGH fills the room. Adrian reveals the Death card.

The door SLAMS shut. And the light switches off.

DARKNESS

FOOTSTEPS break the water.

Shelves SHAKE and discard their contents.

Adrian backtracks to avoid the presences in the room as it circumnavigates him.

Adrian stumbles to his feet and finds the LIGHT SWITCH. He SCREAMS 'ahhh' as he comes face-to-face with dead janitor Giles.

Giles with the broken mop handle in hand, swings it forward in a BLINK of an eye, and stabs Adrian in the face through his gaping mouth. Which instantly kills him.

INT. SHOP - EVENING

ELIZABETH, 45, enters Lady Demor's shop. She's wrapped a little too well for this mild summer's evening.

She shuffles into the shop and wipes her nose with a handkerchief. Another hangs out from her sleeve.

Lady Demor enters from the back. With a glass of whiskey in hand and a cigarette in the other, she takes her seat.

She gestures to the seat opposite.

LADY DEMOR Sit-sit. How may I be of service?

Elizabeth shyly takes her chair.

ELIZABETH

You may not remember me. I came here a year ago and it's come true. Now I need another reading.

Lady Demor nods.

LADY DEMOR Ah yes I remember. A reading about wealth. Right?

ELIZABETH Yes...yes, you're right.

LADY DEMOR

Right.

Lady Demor takes another drag on her cigarette.

LADY DEMOR What kind of reading are you looking for now?

Elizabeth sniffles some more.

ELIZABETH Well...I haven't been feeling so good recently. Lately everything seems to be going from bad to worse.

Lady Demor interjects.

LADY DEMOR And you want Lady Demor to see the good for you...yes?

ELIZABETH Yes Lady Demor. I need to know what good can come from all this bad luck I've received.

Lady Deomor deals the cards.

SUPER: TEN MINUTES LATER

Lady Demor turns the last card of the Major Arcana set.

Elizabeth recoils in horror and shakes her head. She brings out an old handkerchief to wipe away her tears.

> ELIZABETH Oh no, oh no, oh no. It can't be. I go to church every week. What have I done wrong?

Lady Demor examines the cards, and takes a quick drink.

LADY DEMOR This is not good. No no. I'm afraid you have not long to live.

ELIZABETH Is there any way you could be wrong or come up with an alternative reading from the cards?

Lady Demor stubs out her cigarette.

LADY DEMOR I'm sorry Elizabeth. The cards have told their story. It cannot change.

Elizabeth starts to cry and gets up to leave.

Lady Demor glances down upon the Death card. This time it contains an image of Adrian's head at the feet of the Reaper.

She finishes her glass and sets it down.

A Girl, 8, skips into the parlor, looks up at Lady Demor and smiles.

LADY DEMOR Hello sweetie, want to play?

She smiles again, twirls in her red dress and nods to Lady Demor.

GIRL

I'm a princess.

Lady Demor stands up and takes the girl's hand.

LADY DEMOR I'm sorry princess.

She takes the girl's hand and leads her back.

GIRL

Not as sorry as Elizabeth.

The Girl looks up at Lady Demor and smiles before they exit the room.

ON THE TABLE

Adrian's mournful face gazes out from the death card.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE DEATH CARD

Clutched between Tanis' fingers.

TANIS (0.S.) Death and life...they be two sides of the same card.

WIDER

Tanis flips the card -- front to back -- back to front.

TANIS Without one...ain't never gonna be the other.

Tanis sets the card aside -- then looks down to the Celtic Cross spread before her -- then back to us.

She taps the seventh card in the spread -- the one on the lower-right.

TANIS This card...this the card be tellin' us 'bout you.

Tanis moves to flip the card -- but she hesitates.

She looks up with a sly smile.

TANIS Or don't you be wantin' to see?

Tanis lifts the card so only she can see it. Then she laughs aloud.

TANIS

Ho-ho!

She turns the card to us. The Fool!

TANIS Death and the Fool...we got us a pair tonight, indeed!

She lays the Fool card beside Death.

ON THE CARDS

Death and the Fool, together, side-by-side.

TANIS (O.S.) The Fool, he never be expectin' Death...so he never fear it... and maybe these cards be sayin' you be foolish 'til Death have his day. (laughs) Maybe you be so lucky.

FADE OUT.